Task Force for inter-linking of rivers

*115. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Supreme Court has asked the Centre to set up a high level task force to workout the modalities for inter-linking of rivers within ten years and to bring consensus among the States for completion of the project; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) and (b) The Supreme Court of India in the Writ Petition No. 512 of 2002 on 30th September, 2002 directed Union of India to file an affidavit by 28th October, 2002. The Union of India in its Affidavit filed before the Court has stated that the Ministry of Water Resources has prepared a National Perspective Plan for Inter-linking of rivers of the country for transferring water from water surplus basins to water deficit basins and that a presentation on National Perspective Plan was made before the Hon'ble Prime Minister on Inter-linking on rivers on 5th October, 2002. It was also stated in the Affidavit that after the presentation it was suggested that a High Level Task Force can be formed which will go into the modalities for bringing a consensus among the States and suggest mechanism for project funding. The Supreme Court in their order dated 31st October, 2002 took note of the affidavit and observed that, "We do expect that the programme when drawn up would try and ensure that the link projects are completed within a reasonable time of not more than ten years".

Fake currency notes

*116. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fake Indian Currency notes of Rs. 500 denomination worth several crores are in circulation in the market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether law enforcement agencies have recently busted a case involving fake currency notes amounting to Rs. 30 lakh in Delhi; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and what steps Government have taken to curb the circulation of fake currency notes in the market?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) (a) and (b) Information on Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN), recovered or seized, is compiled by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) according to which fake notes of Rs. 500 denomination amounting to Rs. 4.05 crores were recovered/seized in 2001.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Delhi Police busted a racket and recovered counterfeit Indian currency notes of Rs. 500 denomination amount to Rs. 30 lakhs. An FIR has been registered in this context on 22-09-2002.

To curb circulation of fake currency notes in the country, the Govt. has taken a number of steps which, *inter-alia*, include setting up special unit in the Central Bureau of Investigation for exclusive investigation of counterfeit currency notes, scaling up of vigilance by the Border Security Force/Custom Authorities to prevent smuggling of fake currency notes into the country, incorporation of special security features in high denomination notes and dissemination of information on security features through print media and Doordarshan for the benefit of public. A High Level Committee (HLC) of experts, with representations from Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Home Affairs, National Security Council Sectt., Reserve Bank of India and the Bank Note Printing Presses, constituted to examine the whole gamut of problems caused by circulation of fake currency has submitted its report. Based on the recommendations of the HLC, some additional security features have been approved for incorporation in Indian Bank Notes which would make counterfeiting extremely difficult.

RBI concern over Government finances

*117. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has voiced serious concern over the deteriorating Government finances in general and State Government finances in particular;